

PREFACE

The first four books of these piano pieces have been written for the purpose of giving material to beginners—young or old—which should embrace, as far as possible, all problems met with during the first steps. The first, second and third books are designed for the first or first and second year.

These three books differ from a "Piano Method" in the traditional sense by the absence of any technical and theoretical description and instruction. Every teacher knows what is required in this respect and is able to give the earliest instruction without reference to a book or method.

There are frequently several pieces dealing with the same problem to give the teacher and pupil an opportunity of making a choice. It is not necessary to study all 96 pieces.

The first four books have exercises in an appendix the figures in brackets referring to the respective piece the technical problems of which are dealt with in the exercise. For some technical problems several exercises are provided. The teacher may choose the more difficult for the gifted pupil, the easier ones for the less gifted. It is advisable to practise the exercises before studying the pieces. As a matter of fact, quite simple exercises (i.e., simple exercises for the five fingers, for the thumb under, simple broken triads, etc.) are not included—another difference from "Methods." Every teacher knows such exercises and should be able to invent them.

The pieces and exercises are arranged in progressive order according to the technical and musical difficulty. However, the teacher may alter this order in accordance with the ability of the pupil.

The metronome marks, especially in the first, second and third books, should be considered as approximate indications only. Many of the first pieces may be played slower or faster than indicated. As progress is made deviation from the tempo given should not be encouraged and in the fifth and sixth books the time indications must be adhered to. An asterisk at the number of any piece indicates that an explanatory note will be found in the appendix.

For four of the pieces a second piano part is provided. It is most important that the pupil should be given the opportunity to try concerted music as soon as possible and these pieces can be played in this form where two pianos are available.

Four other pieces are set for voice with piano accompaniment. Instrumental tuition should be developed from suitable singing exercises. If started in this way, the practising of pieces for voice and piano should not be difficult. Such exercises are very useful as practice in reading three staves instead of two, the pupil singing and accompanying himself.

The numbers 74 and 95 are arranged for piano solo as well. They should be practised first without voice and only after study should the voice-and-piano arrangement be tried.

The fourth book should be combined with, e.g., the easy pieces from J. S. Bach's "Note Book for Anna Magdalena Bach," the appropriate studies by Czerny, etc.

You are recommended to transpose the easier exercises and pieces into other keys. Even the transcription of the suitable pieces from the first, second and third books could be tried. A "strict" transcription only is meant, with cembalo-like doubling of octaves. Some of the pieces, Nos. 45, 51, 56 for instance, can be played on two pianos, the second player executing the same pieces on the higher octave. Sometimes other developments can be tried. The accompaniment of No. 69 could be simplified as

follows :  etc. In bars 10-11, 14-15, 22-23, 26-27, 30, 32-33 there are

some slight difficulties. Many opportunities are given for original and inventive work of this kind. If transcriptions are practised it might be pointed out that a number of pieces (among the easier ones Nos. 76, 77, 78, 79, 92, 104b, among the more difficult Nos. 117, 118, 123, 145, etc.) are suitable for cembalo. On this instrument the octaves can be doubled by draws-stops.

Advanced pupils may also use these pieces for sight reading.